

FAMILY AND CHILDREN ELECTRONIC SYSTEM (FACES) CHILD WELFARE SACWIS SYSTEM 2005

It is Missouri's desire to develop a single statewide system that is fully SACWIS compliant. Missouri has struggled with creating a system that clearly meets the requirements of the ACF Action Transmittal AT ACF-OISM-001 (issued 2/24/1995). Missouri's existing child welfare systems consist of several independent applications. These systems developed over time as a result of federal programs, state initiatives and changing business needs.

These legacy systems include an extensive use of automated business rules and also capture a significant amount of data. IDMS databases form the base of this architecture, with COBOL programs and subroutines to retrieve and store data in the appropriate database. CICS provides the presentation layer with multiple data entry points and transactions for each of the legacy systems.

By learning how these legacy systems developed over time, it is understandable that the silo effect was prominent in their growth. This has however created data redundancies across the systems as well as duplication of subroutines and batches. The structure of the legacy systems has also not supported the cross-training of staff. Users have to sign on and off of each of the legacy systems as appropriate to complete their work. Further the work flow is paper intensive and the legacy systems do not support the business needs for automation that users currently expect.

Missouri is developing the Family and Children Electronic System (FACES) with a web front-end that will be more user-friendly and functional than current legacy systems. COBOL programs and subroutines will be written to accommodate the new database structure and to function with the web-enabled front end. Existing data will be purified and converted with implementation of each component to retain the invaluable historical data contained in the legacy systems.

FACES will eliminate data and application redundancies that currently exist in the multiple systems, producing a more reliable and efficient tool for use in the delivery of children's services. Data entry will flow from a single entry point menu via a standard web browser with a single sign on/sign off process for users. FACES will automatically flow the users to the next appropriate screen for data entry based on moderately to significantly complex logic. When automated flows are not appropriate, users will be presented with selection choices via drop-down boxes and radio buttons to provide a usable tool that supports the work the users need to accomplish.

Clear and concise error messages will be presented to the user when programmed edits detect missing or invalid data. Code values and descriptions will be presented on-screen for selection, eliminating the need for users to refer

to printed code sheets. Workers and supervisors will be notified of pending or overdue cases or activities needing action via a system of ticklers, notices, alerts and automated listings. The use of paper reports will be drastically reduced. Varying security levels will allow workers and supervisors access to information needed for appropriate caseload and program managements, and will protect against unauthorized access to data that is not related to the performance of their job.

Legacy systems will be retired incrementally as FACES components are implemented and, following full statewide implementation of FACES, all legacy system applications will be retired. Real time update capability will be gained with implementation of FACES, eliminating the need to wait overnight for batch processed updates to take effect. This ability will indirectly but significantly improve data accuracy, staff's decision making and customer service. This technology project will allow Missouri to produce a system that will increase customer satisfaction, improve worker productivity, consistency and accuracy, improve data integrity, reduce paper processes and satisfy SACWIS requirements.